

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A hard boiled candy composition comprising:

(a) a confectionery base comprised of a mixture of at least one sugar and at least one carbohydrate bulking agent which is kept in an amorphous or glassy condition;

(b) ~~at least one botanical selected from the group consisting of Echinacea, Siberian Ginseng, Ginko Biloba, Kola Nut, Goldenseal, Golo Kola, Schizandra, Elderberry, St. Johns Wort, Valerian and Ephedra, and combinations thereof, each~~ having an unpleasant mouthfeel in the form of a tingling sensation or astringency characteristic ~~of said group of botanicals~~; and,

(c) an amount of from about 0.5% to about 5.0% by weight of said hard boiled candy composition of ~~an unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent for suppressing the tingling sensation or astringency characteristic of said group of botanicals, said unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent consisting of one or more partially hydrogenated vegetable oils or saturated fats, said amount being effective to suppress the tingling sensation or astringency characteristic said unpleasant mouthfeel of said group of botanicals~~ Echinacea,

wherein the ratio of the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated oil to the Echinacea is from 1.0/0.6 to 1.0/0.15.

2. - 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously presented) The hard boiled candy composition according to claim 1 wherein the partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is selected from the group consisting of cottonseed, soybean, peanut, palm, sunflower seed and corn oil and combinations thereof.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) The hard boiled candy composition according to claim 1 wherein the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is present at 0.5% to 3.5% by weight of said hard boiled candy composition.

7. (Previously presented) The hard boiled candy composition according to claim 1 wherein the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is present at 0.75% to 3.0% by weight of said hard boiled candy composition.

8. – 27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) A method for suppressing the unpleasant mouthfeel of a hard boiled candy composition which contains a botanical having an unpleasant mouthfeel, which comprises:

(a) providing a confectionery base comprised of a mixture of at least one sugar and at least one carbohydrate bulking agent which is kept in an amorphous or glassy condition and ~~a botanical selected from the group consisting of Echinacea, Siberian Ginseng, Ginkgo Biloba, Kola Nut, Goldenseal, Golo Kola, Schizandra, Elderberry, St. Johns Wort, Valerian and Ephedra, and combinations thereof, each having an unpleasant mouthfeel in the form of a tingling sensation or astringency characteristic of said group of botanicals, and,~~

(b) adding thereto from about 0.5% to about 5.0% by weight of said hard boiled candy composition ~~of an unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent for suppressing the tingling sensation or astringency characteristic of said group of botanicals, said unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent consisting of one or more partially hydrogenated vegetable oils or saturated fats, said amount being effective to suppress the tingling sensation or astringency characteristic said unpleasant mouthfeel of said group of botanicals~~ Echinacea,

wherein the ratio of the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil to Echinacea is from 1.0/0.6 to 1.0/0.15.

29. – 30. (Cancelled)

31. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 28 wherein the partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is selected from the group consisting of cottonseed, soybean, peanut, palm, sunflower seed and corn oil, and mixtures thereof.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 28 wherein the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is present at 0.5% to 3.5% by weight of the hard boiled candy composition.

34. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 33 wherein the saturated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil is present at 0.75% to 3.0% by weight of the hard boiled candy composition.

Claims 35 – 54. (Cancelled)

55. (Currently amended) A hard boiled candy composition consisting essentially of:

(a) a confectionery base comprised of a mixture of at least one sugar and at least one carbohydrate bulking agent which is kept in an amorphous or glassy condition;

(b) ~~at least one botanical selected from the group consisting of Echinacea, Siberian Ginseng, Ginkgo Biloba, Kola Nut, Goldenseal, Golo Kola, Schizandra, Elderberry, St. Johns Wort, Valerian and Ephedra, and combinations thereof, each having an unpleasant mouthfeel in the form of a tingling sensation or astringency characteristic of said group of botanicals;~~ and

(c) ~~an amount unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent for suppressing the tingling sensation or astringency characteristic of said group of botanicals, said unpleasant mouthfeel suppressing agent consisting of from about 0.5% to about 5.0% by weight of said hard-boiled candy composition of one or more partially hydrogenated vegetable oils or saturated fats, said amount being effective to suppress said tingling sensation or astringency characteristic unpleasant mouthfeel of said group of botanicals Echinacea.~~

56. (Previously presented) The hard boiled candy composition according to claim 1 wherein the saturated fat is selected from the group consisting of palm kernel oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, and butter and combinations thereof.

57. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 28 wherein the saturated fat is selected from the group consisting of palm kernel oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, and butter and combinations thereof.

58. -59. (Cancelled)